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ABSTRACT

Managerial motivation models have evolved beyond the human resource tradition of the 1960s and the 1970s to a form of corporate involvement with the personal needs of employees, many of whose family lifestyles have changed dramatically. To analyze the new role for companies and the corporate concern for employees' well-being, this research study surveyed representatives of firms to determine their company's current emphasis on employee development and their position on employer-supported child care. Information requests were sent to 314 firms representing the banking, computer, food, and textile industries. Results indicated that two-thirds of the 62 companies responding assist employees with child care concerns and that 80 percent of these companies go beyond traditional company benefits and tuition reimbursement programs. Provisions for personal development include employee assistance programs, consciousness raising workshops, and career counseling for family members. Companies are responding to the idea that the personal development of America's work force will ultimately lead to a more productive labor force. Additionally, companies are exhibiting a genuine concern for the employee's well-being. If future research proves that existing models inadequately describe a management's approach to employee motivation, a new model may be one with a sociobiological flavor. The mutually reciprocal relationship between management and employee resembles a kinship relationship that management has evolved into a higher level of survival. (CJH)

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The Managerial Motivation Models Appear To Be In The Family Way

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ABSTRACT

Since their beginnings in the early 1900s, managerial motivation models have developed toward respecting and valuing employees. These models have evolved beyond the human resource tradition and have moved into a new dimension of employee commitment. Sixty two company representatives provided information regarding their company's current emphasis in employee development and position on employer-supported child care. Survey results indicate that two thirds of the companies responding are assisting employees with child care concerns and 80% of these companies go beyond traditional company benefits (medical, dental) and tuition reimbursement programs. These companies are providing employee personal development in the form of employee assistance programs, consciousness raising workshops, grammar workshops and career counseling for family members. The survey results may indicate that managerial motivation models have taken on a new dimension of corporate involvment with the employee.

The Managerial Motivation Models Appear To Be In The Family Way

Managerial motivation models have progressed from an unknown entity, to concerned involvement on the part of the employer. The understanding of how managerial motivation models began and how they evolved, is essential in understanding where we are today and where we are headed tomorrow.

Taylor's model of scientific management was replaced by the human relations model in the late 1920s. The machines which were so valuable to the company had needs which were not neglected while the operators' needs were. Both machines and trained people had become major capital investments. Management's function included redesigning jobs to challenge workers and also to encourage workers to participate in managerial decisions. This model also emphasized an improved communication flow between the supervisor and subordinate.

Two symptoms of industrial society were: a) lack of personal meaning for the individual; and b) lack of group cooperation (Mayo, 1945). When an employee's work involves only repetitive tasks the individual will feel no contribution to the final product and ultimately society. Mayo stated that building teamwork does not come naturally, and therefore, needs to be fostered by effective management.

Beginning in the late 1950s with McGregor's "Theory Y" a different philosophy of management emerged. Management's view now became one of a human resource model. It was believed that individuals are underutilized and undervalued by most managers (McGregor, 1960). Theory

Y recognized this underutilization in an effort to encourage managers to realize and support worker potential.

Rensis Likert (1967) proposed the idea of trust and confidence between employer and employee. He recognized the need for workers to voice freely their opinions and for interpersonal interaction between supervisors and subordinates.

Employers are recognizing and responding to the dramatic changes in the family lifestyles of today's employees. American families have acquired new perspectives which necessitate changes in the way employers treat employees (Bernstein, 1986). A new role for companies and the extensive corporate concern for employees in various facets of their lives indicates a shift in employer willingness and employee acceptance of corporate assistance in personal and family matters. Management's concern for family needs reflects the expectations workers have of their employers (Washington & Oyemade, 1984). This research analyzes this new role for employers.

METHODS

Subjects

Information requests were sent to 314 U.S. firms representing the banking, computer, food, and textile industries. The names of these companies were obtained from a list prepared by the Association of MBA Executives (Association of MBA Executives, Inc., 1986). Twenty-five percent of the human resource departments responded to a request for

information regarding the company's current emphasis in employee development and their position on employer-supported child care.

Instruments

The companies surveyed responded to two questions: a) the organization's position on employer-supported child care; and b) the current emphasis in employee development. These questions were included in a letter which explained that the information requested was part of a pilot study for future research.

Statistical Analysis

Percentage of responses regarding the company's program or services were tabulated for the following categories: on-site center 7%; reimbursement account (employee sets aside funds for child care on a pre-tax basis) 5%; referral service 21%; surveyed employee needs 34%; or no service 33%.

The responses regarding the company's emphasis on employee development were classified as: many nontraditional employee development programs 49%; some nontraditional employee development programs 29%; or only traditional employee development programs 22%. The nontraditional programs named included extensive employee assistance programs (EAP counseling includes: job issues and relationships; family, marital, and other relationships; substance abuse; and psychological and emotional problems), consciousness raising workshops (ex. minority issues), grammar workshops and career counseling for family members. The traditional programs included company benefits (eg. medical, dental, leave time) and reimbursement for external job related training.

RESULTS

Forty-nine percent of the 62 companies responding to the information request reported providing extensive employee development opportunities. One third of the companies responding are involved in fulfilling the child-care concerns of their employees. Another one third have investigated the need and possibility of child care at their company. The new effort by employers to share family responsibilities and their involvement in employees' personal growth may indicate a new social role for companies. This involvement also demonstrates a shift in employer willingness and employee acceptance of corporate assistance in personal and family life.

DISCUSSION

For corporations to compete in the face of family changes and a projected labor shortage in the 1990s, it is essential that employers attract and retain the more talented members of this diminishing labor supply. One solution managers are utilizing to accomplish these corporate goals is to fulfill the child care needs of their employees. These goals when achieved create a synergism by accomplishing the basic goal of establishing child care and by reaching the ultimate goal of a more stable and productive work force (Magid, 1983). The managers utilizing humanistic management styles are shaping organizations which respond to the changing environment with greater resiliency.

Companies are taking more of an interest in assisting employees in all aspects of their lives. Profit, the bottom line, has in the past been the common thread in most large businesses. This involvement with

employee needs is more than an effort to raise corporate profits; it appears corporations are exhibiting a genuine concern for our nation's workers.

The history of management shows companies have moved toward a realization that encouraging employees toward optimal functioning is an effective way to increase profits. Today's corporations appear to be committed to the development and welfare of the employee. One company representative commented that if they were not concerned for the employee's well-being the employee would simply leave and go somewhere else. Another company representative stated that their priorities were people, product, and profit in that order. The sentiment reported, by the companies responding to the information request, indicates corporations are moving into an era where concern for the employee is commonplace. Companies are responding to the idea that the personal development of American's workforce will ultimately lead to a more productive labor force.

Future research focusing on managerial motivation models might include validating existing models utilized by companies. This may involve identifying a company's perspective as to the management philosophy they have adopted; and similarly, investigating which model employees feel management exercises.

Possibly, the existing models are not adequate in describing a management's approach to employee motivation. A new model may be one with a sociobiological flavor. Man's relationship with agriculture can be characterized by coercion where resources are regulated. The existing motivation models can be said to be characterized by

reciprocity where there is a conscious expectation that beneficent behavior will be returned (Berghe, 1982). Could it be possible that management has evolved into a higher level of survival efforts, and their practices to motivate employees now resemble a kinship relationship?

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